HARD TIMES.

BY FRANCIS S. SMITH

A merchant sat in his easy-chair
Reading the morning news—
He skimmed o'er all its contents,
Including the book reviews.
Then he started from his mansion
To his office with a sigh,
And groaned "Hard Times!" in anguish,
When a beggar passed him by.

A broker sat in Delmonico's—
The stock board had adjourned—
'Twas plain to see his work that day
No profits had returned,
For as the waiter pressed him
For a fee, he gave a frown,
And muttering angrily, "Hard Times!"
He drank his champagne down.

A lady sat in her boudoir,
All elegance and grace—
Her dress was of the richest,
And trimed with costly lace.
She sighed, "My Charlie's growing
Very careful of his dimes!
I'd have a diamond necklace
If it weren't for Hard Times!"

In a comfortless, dark apartment
A white-faced woman sat.
While the merchant, the broker and lady
"Hard Times" were railing at,
And her landlord stood before her
With a frown upon his face,
And he cried: "Hard Times, old woman!
Pay up or leave the place!"

Then he turned from the frenzied woman
And went to another room,
Where the starving, penniless tenants
Sat shivering in the gloom.
And here with a scowl of anger
"Hard Times," he did repeat,
And when money was not forthcoming
He turned them into the street.

And now the thought comes o'er me
That it might work some cure
For these "Hard Times" if wealthy folks
Could suffer as do the poor.
In other words "a still small voice"
This truth to me imparts,
'Tis not the times that are so hard,
'Tis only human hearts.

—*New York Weekly.*

THE ROPE OF PEARLS.

"What an exquisite thing!" murmured Violet Foyne, in ecstacy. "But why did Roger never show it to me before, and whose could it have been?"

The "exquisite thing" was a heavy rope of beautiful, perfect pearls which Violet, in rumaging in an old trunk of her husband's, had found carefully enveloped in pink cotton at the bottom of a quaint walnut trunk.

She had pounced upon the jewels with childish delight, admiring their milky radiance, while inwardly wondering that Roger had never, in the six months of their wedded life, spoken of their existence.

"It is strange!" mused Violet, twisting the rope reflectively around her fingers.

Suddenly she dropped it as if it had been a viper and gave utterance to a low cry of horror.

"Blood!" she whispered in terror-fraught tones. "Oh, heaven! upon what fearful mystery have I stumbled?"

She reeled toward a chair and closed her eyes to shut out the sight, but in spite of herself her gaze continued to wander toward the heap of gleaming pearls on the floor of the attic and violent shudders shook her frame.

"I will put it back in the casket," murmured Violet to herself, "and when Roger returns I will ask him to explain."

She arose from the easy chair into which she had flung herself, and with much inward repugnance took up the rope of pearls to restore it to its hiding place.

But as she took the casket from the trunk a slip of paper fell amid the pink cotton.

She read it, with paling brow:

DEAR ROGER—Why did you choose pearls? Did you know their language? It is tears. Yet I will wear them to the ball to-night in spite of superstition. Would that you were coming with me instead of that horrid Count Sigmund! Everything. OCTAVIA.

Ah, she understood now! and with a thrill of untold anguish, realized that she was not her husband's first love. And if not his first, she certainly was not his best.

Perhaps, indeed, he had never loved her at all. She was a rich heiress. Had Roger Fayne married her for her wealth? Oh, horrible reflection!

What was the mystery that string of lucid pearls might tell? The dark, carmine stain that marred the beauty of three of them, the minute spatters on others—what did they mean?

Tortured by these thoughts, Violet replaced pearls and note in their quaint receptacle, and donning her wraps, hastily left her home.

She would go to her mother and sob out her misery on that faithful heart which had never yet failed her.

With this design she left the busy thoroughfare of Omaha, and, hailing a street car, rode out to Central Park, the residence of her parents.

Mrs. Gaylord was bending over a huge brass kettle on the kitchen stove, briskly stirring the bubbling contents.

She dropped the ladle in consternation as her daughter's white face appeared at the door.

"Why, Violet, child!" she cried, aghast, "you look like a ghost! Has anything happened?"

"Yes," sobbed Violet, throwing herself upon her mother's breast. "My heart is broken, mamma!"

By degrees Mrs. Gaylord drew from her the whole story, but wisely refrained from saying anything to augment her daughter's feverishly excited state of mind.

"Lie down in here, my child," said she, soothingly, conducting Violet to the cool sitting room and arranging the pillows on the sofa. "You are worn and hysterical, and need rest."

Violet submitted, and after seeing her comfortably established on the lounge, Mrs. Gaylord returned to the kitchen and her neglected jam, closing the door softly behind her.

She had just resumed her study when the gate clicked, there was a sound of quick, firm footsteps up the red brick walk, and Roger Fayne, pale and excited, stood beside her.

"Mother, is Violet here?" he inquired huskily.

"Why, Roger, what is the matter?" queried the diplomatic old woman, as she vigorously stirred her jam.

"Then she is not here!" groaned the young man, sinking despondingly into a chair. "I have driven her from me forever, and all through a piece of unpardonable negligence."

Explain yourself, Roger," said Mrs. Gaylord, gently. "Why has Violet left her home?"

Roger turned his white face toward her with a look of hopeless agony stamped upon his hopeless features.

"I went home," he began, slowly, "in time to take Violet to the afternoon matinee; but finding the house apparently deserted, I wandered through the rooms in quest of her. What impulse led me to the attic chamber I know not, but when I opened the door a cold chill struck upon my heart, for the little hair trunk stood open, with that terrible wooden casket lying on the top of the other contents. I knew it had been placed at the very bottom, and it dawned upon me instantly that Violet had been amusing herself in my absence by exploring the attic, and coming upon the string of pearls, with its accompanying note, had gathered a wrong impression from its contents and left my roof forever."

"I do not comprehend you, Roger," said Mrs. Gaylord, still stirring her jam. "What pearls and note do you mean?"

"Of course you do not know," answered the young man hastily. "I had not even told Violet as yet, though I had long been intending to do so. It is an old story, mother. My Uncle Roger, for whom I was named, was engaged to a lovely girl, Octavia Varien, or the 'Star of Silver Creek,' as she was called by her admirers.

"This was twenty years ago, when Roger Fayne was a young man of 25. He was the chosen lover of beautiful Octavia, but he had one rival, a dark, princely looking German count—Sigmund by name, who had sworn to win the 'Star' from her betrothed, if to do so he periled his own soul.

"One night there was to be a grand ball—a masquerade—but owing to a business engagement my uncle could not escort his lovely fiance, though he intended to drop in later on in the evening.

"So Octavia accepted Count Sigmund as her escort, with the understanding that Roger was to take her home when the ball was over. She was to represent a snow queen, and her lover said to her, as he kissed her lips in farewell the day before the masquerade:

"'I will send you some jewels to correspond with your costume, darling; but don't quite break Count Sigmund's heart with your beauty, my beautiful star.'

Octavia laughed at him, although her heart sunk strangely at his words, and so they parted.

"The jewels came next day—a magnificent rope of pearls. And when arrayed in her ball dress, Octavia Varien was such a vision of loveliness as is rarely seen by mortal eyes.

"So, at least, thought Count Sigmund, and he haunted her through the evening like a shadow. His costume was that of Mephistopheles, and Octavia shuddered and grew whiter than ever when she met his passionate gaze.

"My uncle came at midnight, but he looked in vain among the gay dancers for a sight of his snow queen. She was not visible; but several people had seen her going toward the conservatory with Count Sigmund, and thither he bent his steps.

"The soft odor of jasamine and night blooming cereus filled the air, the murmur of rippling fountains filled his ears, as he wandered among the exotic and tropical plants in the quest of his love.

"On the velvet margin of a little fountain he found her, but no smile of welcome greeted him. In her filmy lace robes, with the rope of pearls crossed over her breast and knotted about her slender waist she lay—dead!

"In her heart a jeweled dagger, of foreign workmanship, gave clew to the assassin, but Count Sigmund was never found. He had fled to his native land.

"My uncle never rallied from the shock. In one short month we laid him beside his murdered Octavia. The pearls passed into my possession. Octavia's life-blood stains them, and with them is the note she wrote after receiving them.

"Such is the story I neglected telling my wife, thinking it too horible for her ears; and now it is too late. I have lost her forever. Oh, Violet, Violet!"

"I am not lost, Roger."

Was it a dream?

No! Violet's soft arms were around his neck, her roseleaf cheek was pressed against his, and her voice was murmuring penitently:

"Forgive me, dear. I have been very foolish. I should have trusted my husband in the face of everything, and I will hereafter.

Mrs. Gaylord was blind and deaf to everything but the contents of the brass kettle; so these two silly young people made it all up, and vowed never to have any more mysteries from each other.

"You may as well stay to tea, children," said Mrs. Gaylord, as she set off the jam and filled the tea-kettle with fresh water. "It's rather late now, and I'd like your opinion on my peach jam."

"You shall have it, mamma dear," said Violet, brushing away her tears.—*Saturday Night.*

WIDE INTERESTS.

Those people are the happiest who have a wide range of personal interests. Enjoyment, indeed, depends more on this one faculty of finding a varied range of sympathies than it does upon the possession of fortune. With the power of being interested in many things the peasant is rich, and without it the king is poor. Each person who can impart to us a new interest in life is a benefactor; each circumstance that does this is a blessing, however it may be disguised. There is spiritual poverty in the incapacity to feel an interest in other lives than our own; it is therefore to be deplored when fastidious tastes, or so-called culture, fix a gulf between sympathy and its object. There is a point at which the individual is too highly polished to be in sympathetic touch with ordinary life; but there is a far higher point of accomplishment and mental achievement when the sympathies become so liberal as to be almost universal in their inclusiveness." That degree of culture whose results are sterility and aridity of personal life, is certainly not to be greatly esteemed. For instance, in a home where the average singing and playing has been a household enjoyment, a greater degree of musical culture would transform the pleasure into a torture, while a yet finer and more perfect culture would create enjoyment again, and find something to admire. There is little doubt that a joyous appreciation of rather a mediocre type of art is yet a more healthful and more hopeful state than the carping, critical attitude that knows enough, indeed, to condemn, but not enough to create better things than those it disdainfully discards. And so "to cultivate a sympathy with all kinds of excellence," is the one path to the highest personal happiness in life.

NO CHANCE FOR JIM.

A gentleman who had lived for years in the far West had come East on a visit to his native town, when he was waited upon by an old negro woman who said, "I beg yo' pardon fo' takin' de liberty ob callin' on you, but I heahs you libs out in de West."

"Yes, I do," replied the gentleman.

"Well, I jess wanted to ask if yo' reckon dar'd be any chance fo' my son Jim out dar?"

"How old is he?"

"He's mos' twenty-fo', sah."

"And what does he want to do?"

"Dar's de trubble, sah; dar's de trubble," said the anxious mother, lowering her voice to a confidential whisper and looking around the room to see if they were alone.

"De fact ob de business is dat Jim dou' wanter do anyt'ing. He wants to be a gemman, Jim does. He's agin wuk, en he don' wanter do nuffin. How yo' reckon he'd make hit out dar where you come from?"

The gentleman felt it his duty to inform the mother that the West, as well as the East, already contained too many men of Jim's class.

TOO SMART.

Base-ball Player—Why is the first inning of a base-ball game always called the best?

Manager—I don't know. Why?

Base-ball Player—Because it is the big inning of the game.

Manager—Here is your release.—*Wasp.*

FLATTERY is a sort of bad money to which our vanity gives currency.

AROUND THE DIAMOND.

CLOSE OF THE LEAGUE BASE-BALL SEASON.

After an Exciting Finish New York Captures the Pennant, with Boston a Close Second, and Chicago in Third Place—Prospects for Next Season.

The National league championship season of 1889 has ended and never before in the history of baseball championship contests has the race been so close or so desperate. On the last Saturday noon Boston and New York were each confident of winning the pennant, while Chicago and Philadelphia were each as equally sure that the third place in the race was theirs. As the result of the last day's games New York steps over Boston's head and carries off the pennant; Chicago wrests third place from Philadelphia; Cleveland and Pittsburg stand tied for fifth place.

Without doubt the disappointment felt by lovers of the game and admirers of the team in Boston is bitter. With the highest salaried team in the circuit, and one of the most successful team managers in the country, Boston has made a strong effort to carry off champion honors. That the team was looked upon as a winner by nine out of ten baseball enthusiasts throughout the country is probably true, and none were more confident of victory than Manager Hart and his players. The sudden and unexplainable letdown of its strongest hitters, at a time when they should have been doing their best stick work, has beyond question hurt the team more than anything else.

As between Boston and New York the greater credit is due the latter. Boston has at no time this season played ball under such disadvantages as the Giants have faced. Had Hart's aggregation been located on Manhattan island and the Giants at the Hub it is quite likely that Boston would not have been in the race during the last two weeks. There is little room for question as to which is the better team. In one point of play only has Boston been the equal of the Giants—its batting. When it comes to fielding, running bases, team work, and infield strength, the Gothamites are greatly the superiors of the Bostonians. It is safe to say that while Boston will to a great extent have the sympathy of baseball lovers everywhere, there are few who are not glad to see the Giants win their second successive league pennant.

Chicago is to be congratulated upon its brilliant finish. Without its team captain, and with its infield broken, the home team has played ball which would have won the pennant had it been begun during the first half of the season. There are many who at different stages of the race, when the outlook was anything but rosy for the Blacks, considered them out of the fight entirely, yet it is unlikely that these same prophets ever saw a cleaner game of baseball than the Chicago team put up during the last week of the championship season.

While the season has been a bright one from an artistic standpoint, it has been a disappointment financially to all but two clubs in the league circuit. Boston has made a great deal of money during the last six months, and Philadelphia has done well, but Washington, Indianapolis, and Pittsburg have lost, and neither New York nor Chicago, in the vernacular of the baseball magnate, "has made a dollar." This statement may, of course, be taken with a grain of allowance. Chicago may find itself with a few thousand dollars on the right side of the ledger, but such a gain as this is not looked upon as worth the season's trouble by baseball club magnates.

Had New York been able to play the season through upon the old polo grounds it would have made money this season, as it did last, but the expense of fitting up new grounds and the loss of patronage sustained during the weeks the team played upon Staten Island have more than offset the receipts of the season.

The poor showing Chicago made at the outset has had much to do with the comparatively light attendance at the home grounds, but the inclement weather has also eaten a big slice out of the Chicago receipts, as well as those of every other team in the circuit.

With Pittsburg's misfortunes the public is familiar, and the fact that Indianapolis and Washington, though at times playing brilliant ball, have been unable to make anything better of themselves than "tail enders," has been the cause of their poor attendance.

Cleveland, as a result of its brilliant work in the first half of the season, proved a drawing card, and before it began to take a tumble had guaranteed itself against loss, although it will probably not now declare any large dividends.

From present indications the winter will not lack activity in baseball circles. Beyond question a determined effort will be made by league players during the coming months to complete and strengthen a circuit composed of brotherhood clubs which will next season compete for patronage with the clubs of the National league. If they are successful, next season will inaugurate a baseball war which can only end with the ruin of either the league or the Brotherhood. Meantime the league will have much important legislation to carry through. A not improbable change will be discussed in the league circuit by which Cincinnati and Brooklyn may take the places of Washington and Indianapolis in the league next season.

Of the minor organizations of the country the International and Western associations have been fairly successful. In the circuit of the latter, Minneapolis, which last year lost $8,000 and dropped out of the race, has proved a phenomenon, and is said to have cleared close upon $20,000. St. Paul is said to have cleared $6,000, Milwaukee $4,000, and Omaha $1,000. But for the sale of Crooks to Columbus, however, the pennant winners would have been losers. Denver quits with $2,000 in pocket, while Des Moines loses $4,000, Sioux City $6,000, and St. Joseph $6,000.

The International association championship season has ended. Detroit won the pennant rather easily.

The Minneapolis story about the brotherhood wanting St. Paul and Minneapolis to take the places of Washington and Indianapolis in the United Business Association league of 1890 is not true. Brooklyn and Buffalo have been selected for the vacancies to be created. There was never any idea of putting a brotherhood team in Detroit, although "Buck" Ewing did propose a descent on Cincinnati. If a northern team should be taken in St. Paul would be preferred, but Buffalo is a certainty and so almost is Brooklyn.

FOUND WATERY GRAVES

AN APPALLING ACCIDENT ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

The Steamer Corona Bursts her Boiler Near Baton Rouge and Immediately Goes to the Botton of the Stream—List of the Passengers and Crew.

[Baton Rouge (La.) special.]

The elegant side-wheel steamer Corona, of the Ouachita line, plying between this city and Ouachita River points, burst her boiler and immediately sank in midstream. The death-roll is known to include forty persons, and probably more were killed.

The loss of life would have been greater than it was, but the steamer St. Louis was just approaching the Corona and aided in picking up those who were not killed. The boilers blew downward and knocked the whole bottom out of the boat, which was in midstream.

The Corona was built at Cincinnati and was worth $20,000, having recently had $12,000 in repairs put on her. She was running at the time of the disaster in the place of the Josie W. Her boilers were inspected last week and pronounced A1. She carried about 100 passengers. Experts are at a loss to account for the explosion. She was laden with cotton. Following is a list of the lost crew:

J. W. Blanks, captain.
J. V. Jordan, first clerk.
Charles Cellas, second clerk.
Swimp Hann, third clerk.
Fred Dinkle, bar-keeper.
Fred Oberman, bar-keeper.
Pat Ryan, steward.
Dick Curtis, fireman.
Tom Shock, engineer.
Henry Doyle, porter.
Jim Swipe, porter.
Tom Burns, deckhand.
Mr. Tate, deckhand.
Henry Davis, deckhand.
Tom Cook, sailor.
Billy Young, second mate.
Sam Steele, Texas boy.
Second Mate Sam Steele.

To this must be added both captains, the deck-watch, eight roustabouts and a boy.

The passengers killed were:

Dr. Atwell, a chiropodist, and four negro musicians traveling with him.
Mr. Scott, of Smithland, La.
Mrs. Davis, of Stockman, Texas.
Mr. Koench.
Mrs. Huff, of Opelousas.
Mrs. Kaufmans, with a nurse and her eldest child.

The following named passengers were saved:

Mrs. Henry Blanks and two children.
Mrs. Mann.
Mrs. Robert Robertson.
Mrs. Kaufman and children.
Capt. Cornwell.
B. G. Brown.
Mrs. J. R. Meredith.
Mrs. J. J. Mason.
Mr. L. F. Baughman.
Mr. Comstock, of Donaldsonville.
Mr. John Carr, of Harrisonburg.

Capt. T. C. Sweeney, one of the owners of the line, who assumed command on the death of Capt. Blanks, says the explosion was not due to a too high pressure of steam. He had just had occasion to examine the gauge and is positive there was not a pressure of more than 135 pounds.

Mrs. Robertson says when the Corona arrived opposite False River Landing, about sixteen miles below Bayou Sara, one of her boilers exploded, tearing the boat to pieces, when she sank in deep water in a few seconds. Mrs. Robertson says she was wedged in the ladies' cabin with some of the debris lying across her lower limbs, but was suddenly released and found herself floating in the river. She sank twice, but luckily she was picked up and escaped with only a few bruises on her limbs.

DEMISE OF EX-GOV. MARTIN.

The Well-Known Kansas Politician and Editor Expires at Atchison.

An Atchison (Kan.) dispatch says: Col. John A. Martin, ex-Governor of Kansas and editor of the Atchison *Champion*, is dead after a nine weeks' illness with a disease the physicians could not diagnose. He leaves a wife and seven children. He was born March 10, 1839, at Brownsville, Fayette County, Pa. In his youth he was a companion and playmate of James G. Blaine, who was also born in that city. When old enough he was apprenticed to the printer's trade and learned the art in the office of the Brownsville *Clipper*. In October of 1857 he came to Kansas, settling at Atchison. He worked for a short

JOHN A. MARTIN.

time on the *Squatter Sovereign*, a Democratic paper, and afterward he went to Redpath's paper, the *Crusader of Freedom*, published at Doniphan. In 1858 he bought the *Squatter Sovereign*, changing the name to *Freedom's Champion* and converting it into a free-state paper. Later in the paper's history the name was changed to the *Champion*, and it has been an earnest and faithful advocate of the Republican party from the beginning of Colonel Martin's ownership of it until the present. He was a member of the board of managers of the National Soldiers' Homes. He was elected Governor of Kansas in 1886. During the war he was Colonel of the Eighth Kansas Infantry and served in the Army of the Cumberland.

FORCED circumstances cannot depress a negro or suppress his native wit. The other morning a gang of them were working on the rock pile, and above was a placard bearing the inscription: "Do not disturb us; this is our busy day."

THE Iowa cheese factories talk of organizing into a corporation and want a name. We suggest the Milo Society.